



PRESS RELEASE

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For Information Contact Public Affairs

HARRIET BERNICK

Telephone: (602) 514-7736

Pager: (602) 356-0004

PHOENIX MEN SENTENCED FOR MARIJUANA AND MONEY LAUNDERING

TUCSON, ARIZONA--The United States Attorney for the District of Arizona announced today that JAIME SAMANIEGO-PEDREGO of Phoenix, Arizona was sentenced to 15 years in prison and SIGIFREDO SAMANIEGO-PEDREGO of Phoenix, Arizona was sentenced to 11 years in prison by United States District Judge Raner Collins in Tucson, Arizona.

JAIME SAMANIEGO-PEDREGO had pled guilty on April 10, 2003 to conspiracy to commit money laundering, conspiracy with the intent to distribute over 1,000 kilograms of marijuana, and illegal re-entry after deportation. SIGIFREDO SAMANIEGO had pled guilty to the same charges on April 15, 2003. JAIME SAMANIEGO earned over \$64,850 in proceeds from the distribution of marijuana from December of 1998 through February of 2001. He forfeited over \$12,000 in cash in addition to several vehicles.

According to the January 23, 2002 indictment, JAIME SAMANIEGO presented cash to his spouse, KARLA QUINONES, which represented proceeds of JAIME SAMANIEGO's and SIGIFREDO SAMANIEGO-PEDREGO's illegal drug trafficking activities in which both SAMANIEGOs' possessed

with the intent to distribute 1,000 kilograms (3,847 pounds) or more of marijuana.

On December 15, 1998, using cash supplied by JAIME SAMANIEGO, KARLA QUINONES, along with SIGIFREDO SAMANIEGO, purchased several cashier's checks under \$10,000 from several banks. These cashier's checks totaling \$19,791.68 were presented to Transnation Title to close on their residence located at 8744 W. Whittan Ave. in Phoenix, Arizona.

On January 5, 2000, near Glendale, Arizona, JAIME SAMANIEGO, using the alias Ruben Lopez Vega, made a payment of \$9,999.00 to Sunland Lincoln Mercury for the purchase of a Mercury Grand Marquis automobile. This payment came from the proceeds of the illegal drug trafficking activities.

On February 16, 2001, JAIME SAMANIEGO and SIGIFREDO SAMANIEGO made a payment with the illegal funds in the amount of \$9,000.00 to Courtesy Chevrolet in Phoenix, Arizona for the purchase of a Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck.

JAIME and SIGIFREDO SAMANIEGO were in the country illegally after having been previously deported.

"This office will continue to prosecute drug traffickers and money launderers to the fullest extent of the law," said Paul Charlton, United States Attorney for the District of Arizona.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the I.R.S. Criminal Investigation, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The prosecution was handled by Mary Sue Feldmeier, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR-01-0461-TUC
RELEASE NUMBER: 2004-053

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